

¿Dónde
están los 43?

Communiqués from
Chicagoiguala

Semillas Autónomas

Alumno desaparecido de
Ayotzinapa, Gro.



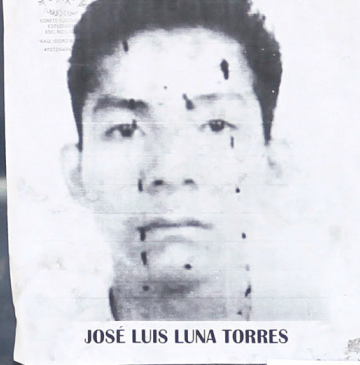
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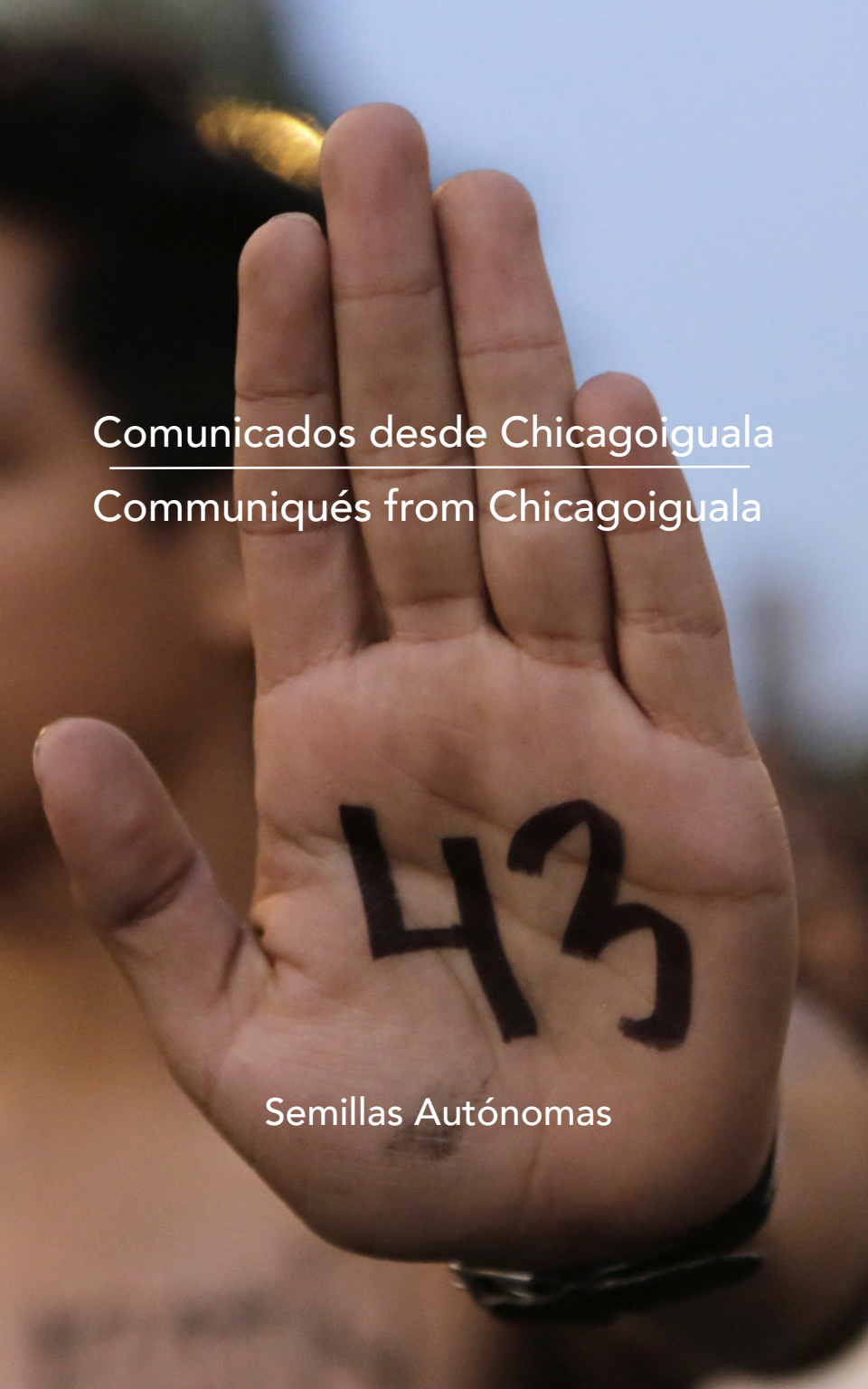


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Comunicados desde Chicagoiguala
Communiqués from Chicagoiguala

Semillas Autónomas



Masked accomplices and the parents of the missing students from Ayotzinapa seize and burn ballots in Tixtla, Guerrero, canceling the 2015 elections in a town of 40,000 residents. The deployment of federal forces followed daily disturbances where people stormed election offices, burned thousands of ballots and ransacked the headquarters of political parties in the states of Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas.

Introduction

The movement sparked by the forced disappearance of 43 students from Ayotzinapa is part of an ongoing struggle of indigenous people, campesinxs and students against state sanctioned violence and capitalist expansion. The Popular Assemblies in Mexico have been setting a course for actions to blockade and disrupt the workings of transnational capital, to create forms of self-organization and self-governance from below.

Autonomous groups of migrants in Chicago have tried to develop pathways for spreading the rebellion on the outside. They responded with protests, assemblies, teach-ins, public fora, and gatherings. Over the course of several years, they targeted both the so-called War on Drugs and the making of "Latino" politics in the United States as different fronts of a counter-insurgency war. They also organized a series of occupations and blockades of the Mexican Consulate. These direct actions faced repression from a layered security apparatus of transnational private security firms, US State Department agents, and Chicago Police. They forced into visibility the collusion between political/economic elites on both sides of the border in the repression of the rebellions and the active suppression of their spreading in the diaspora. The actions also provoked emotional and intimate exchanges, as some people distanced themselves from what they saw as "violent" tactics, while others joined as participants or witnesses. The occupations of the Consulate opened up a collective exploration of struggle politics, the nature of political violence, and the ethics of conflict.

There are ongoing pressures on autonomous groups to make their existence legible to the academic/nonprofit/liberal

sphere, to deliver themselves to mainstream, social or independent media – without acknowledging the asymmetry of these power relations, or the ways these asymmetries require violence for their reproduction. This drive towards legibility we experience as a form of dispossession, a way of mining a social capacity for possibilities of profit extraction. Instead of a narrative or a presentation about who is doing what, with whom and how/where/why, this contribution compiles a series of excerpts from written and audio communiqués, event flyers or calls to action released by Semillas Autónomas between 2014 and 2017.¹ The form of this contribution follows from existing commitments and ways of working.

“Who Disappeared the 43 students from Ayotzinapa?” (December 2014)²

The Mexican Embassy in the United States has instructed consulates to “minimize the impact” of the protests taking place in solidarity with Ayotzinapa. The story they are selling us is this: *the federal government is fighting crime and making great progress towards justice. Uprisings destabilize the promise of justice and prosperity; stay calm and return to “normal.”*

¹ The text that follows are extracts from communiqués released Semillas Autónomas in different formats between 2014 and 2017. Some were flyers announcing or calling for specific actions, others were flyers we distributed at actions, and others were online only. Most were both in some form, except for some anonymous flyers/banners etc. The audio communiqués were online and republished by many independent media outlets across the border. One statement was written to be read at the Asamblea Popular to be held inside, once the consulate was breached, which was one was only circulated by video recording. More information is available at: semillasautonomas.org.

² “Who Disappeared the 43 students from Ayotzinapa?” protest/action flyer, released December 2014.

At the same time, President Obama has announced "administrative relief" for immigrants, the latest show in a long series of reform spectacles. We are promised probation for categories of desirable immigrants in exchange for expanding the conditions that cast us as disposable lives. The message is this: *you should be grateful and cooperate. Uprisings destabilize the promise of status and prosperity; stay calm and return to normal.*

The United States and Mexico are enforcing a social peace that is a social death. They call it the War on Drugs. This is not about fighting organized crime and the narco cartels, whose operations are intimately linked with both governments and transnational finance. Instead, the War on Drugs is a way to govern through deathmaking, disappearance, and terror, to govern not in the interests of living beings but in the interests of capital. This war is not just against the students from Ayotzinapa, but against the consciousness and lifeways they represent.

The true "organized crime" is created and maintained by the state and by corporate interests who seek to expand their control over the people, lands, and resources of the Americas. In the killings and disappearances, the state is the author and executor at the service of capital.

The state disappears those who arm themselves in self-defense against the narcos, mining companies, and government occupation. The state disappears the Yaquis who fight in defense of ancestral waters and the right to exist. The state disappears those defending the lands from resource extraction, those who refuse to acquiesce to their own destruction. The state disappears the women it has displaced to the maquilas. The state disappears all who stand in the way of the neoliberal restructuring of life, those who create autonomy and threaten

the interests of multinational corporations. The state disappears red, black, and brown peoples into prisons and detention centers, into borders, into graveyards, into the living death of servitude and assimilation.

This War on Drugs has displaced us and millions of others, but crossing the border did not make us free. The organized crime cartels of political parties, banks, big business, and Poli-Migra continue this war here in the US. The deaths continue at the borderlands. The disappearances continue into detention centers and deportations, with over two million men, women and children migrants kidnapped by Homeland Security forces in the United States under the Obama administration. The rest of us are bribed with offers of "relief" that only increase the oppression, surveillance, and enforcement against us. We are shackled into a classification system of permits and papers, of degrees of unfreedom, to keep us afraid and to keep us silent, to keep the rebellion from crossing the border into the United States.

From "Comunicado Sobre la Toma del Consulado General de Mexico en Chicago" (October 2014)³

If we do nothing, if we say nothing, if we remain passive and well-behaved as is the expectation, they will continue to kill and disappear us. We are poor. We are the people that the middle class, the class that has money, regards as a nuisance, as garbage, as vandals, as useless and without worth, people without education, ignorant people. We are the social class that has been impoverished, where there is no land, where there is

³ "Comunicado Sobre la Toma del Consulado General de Mexico en Chicago," audio communiqué released to independent media, October 2014. Online: <https://soundcloud.com/moratoriumondeportations/communique2>

no education, where there is not water even, because they are stealing it all, where we are dispossessed and disappeared and murdered for thinking, existing, surviving.

To the US and Mexican narco-capitalists, to those who govern from above, we are the waste of society, we are better off dead or brought to nonlife as servants to their papers, permits and ID's. They want to convince us that this form of government and rule is the only way to organize our communities, our lives.

We will no longer stand in line. We refuse to be converted to numbers, to become obedient, lifeless things. We occupy today to affirm our humanity, our survival, our rage and defiance, to face and confront this space that should belong to us.

"What is the War on Drugs?" (January 2015)⁴

The Mexican government claims to be fighting a war against narco traffickers. But the government has always been in the drug business, and cartels now control government officials and institutions across the country. The narco-state is indeed waging a war – but it is a war in the interest of the big players of global capitalism. It is part of continuing and enforcing trade agreements such as NAFTA, which force open all of Mexico to the unhindered extraction of profit. The function of the war is to impose a political and economic restructuring of Mexico in the interests of transnational capital. This war is good for big business.

⁴ What is the War on Drugs?" translation from protest flyer "¿Qué hay detrás de la guerra contra las drogas?" January 2015. online: http://www.semillasautonomas.org/3_war_on_drugs_spanish_vertical_jpeg/

This is what social movements call *narco-capitalism*: a form of globalization in which national governments are key players in the global drug trade, and the drug trade plays a key role in expanding the control of transnational corporations over land, resources, and people. Meanwhile, these same governments adopt an official policy of “War on Drugs” as a pretext for increased militarization and for subjugating their people.

The US-sponsored War on Drugs in Mexico since 2006: 100,000+ people murdered and 30,000+ disappeared; mass graves in Guerrero, Tamaulipas, Chihuahua, and other states; a rise in attacks against transmigrants; increase in torture and executions; expansion of the drug trade and of extraction industries; mass economic displacement, land and water dispossession of indigenous peoples and campesinx; neoliberal “reforming” of education, labor, judiciary, energy and finance.

The United States has been funding this war through the Merida Initiative and other “anti-narcotics” programs. About \$3 billion has gone to transnational logistics and consulting firms that “restructure” Mexican society to make it friendly to foreign investment, or to buying weapons from US manufacturers and paying private military companies. The same thing happens with the \$11.3 billion that Mexico has spent. This is public money, money stolen from people on both sides of the border – and it is going directly to Boeing, Raytheon, Blackwater, Halliburton, and others. The US private sector and government also facilitate the transfer of military-grade weaponry into the hands of the drug cartels – over 90% of the weapons used in narco killings originate in the United States. The US sponsors the slaughter, thus justifying an increase of military intervention. As in the case of Colombia, an increase in US-backed (para)militarization correlates with high levels of displacement and dispossession of

people, especially indigenous people, living in areas of strategic economic importance, and these displacements serve the interests of mining companies and other transnationals. As the war on drugs expands, transnational corporate control over entire regions expands, and exploitation of the people and the resources deepens.

The United States has a history of training military and paramilitary forces in the use of terror. The governments tell us that terror is the product of cartel violence and that state military+police forces are the only possible solution. But government forces also strategically use disappearance, execution, torture, and mutilation against specific populations. They target students, workers, campesinxs, indigenous peoples, activists, all those who resist or who could resist, including communities organizing armed self-defense. The goal of terror is political: it is not only about killing people, but also about silencing, intimidation, eliminating political resistance, and destroying lifeways. The United States has perfected the use of terror over decades of experimentation in Central America and the Middle East: it is called counter-insurgency.

"#Chicagoiguala" (September 2015)⁵

How is Chicago connected to Iguala and the attack on the Ayotzinapa students that took place there? One of the buses the young students tried to commandeer had a stash of narcotics destined for Chicago's La Villita, a major hub in the cross border drug trade. The students, so the official story goes, accidentally interfered with the shipment and were thus punished by the narcos. But Chicagoiguala is not just a drug corridor.

⁵ "#Chicagoiguala," interventions on social media platforms, compiled September 2015

Chicagoiguala is where we live and struggle against the forces of assimilation and mental colonization. From here we can see how it is constructed, an integrated global supply-chain linking captive labor, extraction, assembly plants, finished commodities, planning processes and financial flows. It is how logistics firms and consultants “restructure” the state, channeling public moneys and migrant remittances into infrastructure projects that open up new territories for transnational extraction. It is how Mexican economic and political elites are organized in the US under the name of Latino politics, whose function is to de-indigenize and manage the mass migration.

Chicagoiguala is a counterinsurgency corridor. It is how our struggles for liberation are disarticulated by “immigration reform” politics and the electoral spectacle.

“¡Black & Brown People Rise Up! Against police violence, la Migra and Latino political establishment.”

(December, 2015)⁶

In Chicago, 26th Street is second only to Michigan Avenue in terms of financial power. But the economic significance of 26th Street isn’t measured in Louis Vuitton bags. This is an important street for US-Mexico Narcocapitalist relations. [...] We ask our Brown communities in #LaVillita #Pilsen #LittleGuerrero #Cicero #BackoftheYards #BrigthonPark #HumboldtPark and beyond to organize in the streets and stand shoulder to shoulder with our Black Compañerxs. Our struggles for liberation are connected across the “Americas.” The silence must end in our Brown communities. We must clarify that the

⁶ ““¡Black & Brown People Rise Up! Against police violence, la Migra and Latino political establishment.” Call to protest/action flyer, December 2015. Online: <http://www.semillasautonomas.org/black-and-brown-people-rise-up/>

"Hispanic / Latino" political leadership of Chicago does not represent us — they police us, they sell us out, they try to control and extinguish our struggles for liberation.

We are not Anita "Serial Killer Accomplice" Alvarez. We are not killer cop George Hernandez. We are not Chuy "1,000 More Cops" Garcia. We are not Danny "Gentrification Champion" Solis. We are not Luis "Border Militarization" Gutierrez. We are not Carlos "We Call The Cops" Ramirez-Rosa.

"¡Nestora Libre!" (July 2015)⁷

Nestora Salgado is a Comandanta in the indigenous community self-defense force of Olinalá, Guerrero, and a leader in the CRAC-PC (Regional Coordinating Committee of Community Authorities). Nestora Salgado was extrajudicially captured by Mexican federal forces in August 2013. Last year a federal judge in Mexico ordered Nestora's release; nevertheless, state authorities refused without judicial cause. We have been informed that they are attempting to manufacture more charges which can result in a 1,000 year prison sentence! After a 24 day hunger strike, Nestora Salgado was transferred to Tepepan, Mexico City. Support is urgently needed for her defense and liberation.

Nestora Salgado migrated to the US from Guerrero, Mexico. Even though she became a naturalized US citizen, she defied the pressures to assimilate into the "American Dream" and instead returned to Guerrero to join her people's armed struggle for liberation. As a Comandanta, Nestora confronted the narcotraffickers, transnational mining companies as well the state violence unleashed in Mexico under the guise of the US-

⁷ "¡Nestora Libre!" flyer for Free Nestora Campaign, released July 2015, updated August 2015.

backed “War on Drugs.” Through her work against patriarchy and gender-based violence, womyn have become central participants in the political process of self-determination and self-defense in Olinalá.

Nestora’s resistance is part of a larger continuum of African and Indigenous people’s struggles for self determination. Specifically, the CRAC emerged along the coast of Guerrero (Costa Chica) as a struggle for self-defense linking Afro-Mexican and Indigenous communities. The CRAC is a legally constituted entity, but its purpose and demands exceed and subvert the framework of the law. Guerrero’s constitution allows for the formation of indigenous ‘community police’ under State Law 701 which recognizes original people’s right to self-determination. However, CRAC is not an attempt by indigenous people to police themselves or to collaborate with established police forces, but rather represents an effort to build counter-power, foment ungovernability, and build networks of defense against the encroachment of organized crime, the state, and transnational corporations. This collective project has found itself in a relative deadlock with neoliberal plans of extraction and development. As a result Mexico, the U.S. and Canada have worked together to strengthen, arm and paramilitarize organized crime networks with the intent of displacing indigenous people from their traditional lands and securing their economic interests in the region.

The imprisonment of Nestora Salgado, as well as many other fighters such as Gonzalo Molina and Arturo Campos, is a direct result of this same politics of economic and military intervention, which seeks to disarticulate the process of indigenous autonomy and self-determination.

"On the violent eviction of beloved okupa Chanti Ollin in Mexico City" (November 2016)⁸

Chanti Ollin grows autonomy as a system of integrity and interaction, a system of roots, and of attachments to our roots. Chanti Ollin is a menace to mechanisms of social control and to the forces of death-as-life. The danger is regaining our mindfulness, finding ourselves beyond the arm of freedom that schools in the depths of the screen, the arm that self tied our binds, the knots that stilled our movements and gave ourselves up so willingly. The caution is that we who are hungry can feed ourselves, we who are desplazados can shelter each other. The harm towards the state is constructing bodies that heal and find each other moving towards wholeness. Legs that march, bodies that fill, and backs that do not break, this architecture is invincible.

"Migrant Resistance in the Time of Apocalypse" (February 2017)⁹

Liberal panic at the election of Donald Trump is fueling new opportunities for social movement managers. We are now told that we can resist the reign of Trump by rallying — in an orderly fashion — behind the familiar immigrant rights nonprofits. But the liberalism of the 'immigrant rights left' does not offer a way out; *it can not even explain what the fuck is going on*. And that is because these same nonprofits have historically sold out migrant and indigenous communities to produce 'eligibles' convenient to empire, a small caste of worthy 'potential citizens.' They have attached themselves to the Democratic Party to

⁸ "On the violent eviction of beloved okupa Chanti Ollin in Mexico City," private correspondence, November 2016.

⁹ "Migrant Resistance in the Time of Apocalypse," flyer/communiqué, February 2017.

champion a politics of increased deportation, criminalization and the expropriation of indigenous lands in exchange for merit-based legalization. More recently they have fear-mongered our communities into applying for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), arguing that identification from/with the State was the same as protection from violence. They have stolen our bodies, energies and struggles and turned them into social and political capital for themselves. And they have gambled this capital on a neoliberal consensus that, despite the hype and bullshit, was never meant to dispel the specter of white settler nationalism. The immigrant rights left have been operating as the foot-soldiers of a counter-insurgency that needed them as intermediaries.

For us, Trump's rise to power flows directly from this context.

Now we have people like David Spencer, the infamous punched-in-face Nazi, spewing forth what would previously have been hidden from the cameras: "America was, until this past generation, a white country, designed for ourselves and our posterity. It is our creation, it is our inheritance, and it belongs to us." This 'primal scream' pushes back on codes of multicultural neoliberal civility to confront a crisis of white-settler coherence brought about by the disorientations of globalized economies. Trump and his many Spencers are part of a process of validating and managing the resentments of white-settlers – and this requires the unabashed celebration of the making and maintaining of settler-colonialism. At the heart of Trump's promise to build a wall on the 'US-Mexico border' is not the deterrence of immigrant bodies or the making of punishable, exploitable people – which liberals rightly argue is better accomplished through less spectacular and more subtle

surveillance and apprehension mechanisms – but the material consecration of the symbolic power of the white State in response to its perceived erosion.

Trump's tirades about 'criminals' and 'bad hombres' coupled with near ecstatic invocations of 'law and order', are meant to unleash a politics of violence that rejoices in dismembering and capture. But this rejection of neoliberal management and civility is not a move away from globalization. Instead, it is its crowning achievement. This approach represents a change in a strategy towards perception management rather than a departure from the quest for a productive, globally integrated capitalism. It does not retreat but rather evolves the current constellation of power, and it is causally intertwined with the fruits of neoliberal policies.

Resistance to the future-colony requires a move away from liberal and reform-centered politics that will only betray us in the end. The connection between white-settler nationalism and anti-colonialism is that neither are interested in obscuring the violent nature of settler-coloniality.

"Ni vencidxs, ni vendidxs." (March 2017)¹⁰

We should clarify that as migrants we are not helpless. Nor are we harmless. Despite our thick criminal dockets and deportable statuses, we do not seek to be well-behaved citizens who are productive for capitalism.

Instead, we conspire alongside some of the most dangerous elements of the encampment at Standing Rock. But this is not the only terrain from which to kill a black snake. Or a hydra. In a colony known as Mexico, Indigenous Zapatistas have

¹⁰ "Ni vencidxs, ni vendidxs," private correspondence March 2017.

managed to create & hold spaces where ancestral autonomy has flourished in the face of a self cannibalizing social form. We work to support the CRAC-PC and the armed indigenous self-defense struggles in Olinalá, Guerrero. We find instruction and an affirming affinity with the anti colonial struggles unfolding in O'odham lands along the so-called US-Mexico border. It is these struggles that create the conditions from which we can envision a future that is not the United States of America. Here, we witness the artificial and arbitrary nature of colonial laws, treaties, boundaries, and borders that transmogrify as quickly as corporate interests dictate and as terribly as state armies enforce. As migrants, as settlers, as newcomers, we are guided to develop collective sabotage and refusal anchored in an absolute negation of colonial rule. We see that we must learn/remember ways of feeding ourselves and our rebellions, of holding prayer, materially and spiritually. For many in Standing Rock, attacking the nodes of colonial infrastructure was part of this prayer, dissolving myths of indigenous people as non-violent, eternal victims of a perennial process of life- and land-taking.

Colonialism is layered, textured by trauma, and made all the more constant by the *sauganash* or *sellouts* as our Lakota friends from the Chi-Nations Youth Council have taught us.